
The Dzungarian Yellow-flowered Species of *Limonium* (Plumbaginaceae)

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ABSTRACT. The distinguishing characters between the closely related *Limonium chrysocomum* and *L. semenovii* are given. The new combinations *L. semenovii* var. *chrysocephalum* and *L. semenovii* var. *sedoides* are proposed, and a key separating these varieties is presented.

Limonium chrysocomum (Karelin & Kirilov) Kuntze and *L. semenovii* (Herder) Kuntze are very closely related yellow-flowered species that have long been confused. The former grows in rocky areas in deserts and on dry stony slopes, hills, and low mountains in northern Xinjiang and Dzungarian Gobi (western Mongolia, Kazakhstan). In contrast, *L. semenovii* grows in desert and steppe stony slopes, hills, and low mountains, on salt sands, *Haloxylon* desert woodlands, and scree, especially on tertiary gypsum deposits, and is distributed in Xinjiang (north and south foothills of Tian-Shan), Dzungarian Alatau, and Gobi (eastern Kazakhstan, western Mongolia). The two species can be separated by the following key:

- 1a. Stems and branches finely warty at least just below inflorescence; external bractlets of spikes glabrate, very rarely pilose in the eastern plants (var. *pubescens* Linczevski) *L. chrysocomum*
- 1b. Stems and branches glabrate; external and internal bractlets of spikes almost always densely and long pilose, very rarely glabrous in the western part of the species range (var. *glabra* Linczevski) *L. semenovii*

Limonium chrysocephalum (Regel) Linczevski and *L. sedoides* (Regel) Kuntze are best treated as varieties of *L. semenovii* and not *L. chrysocomum*, as was done by Peng (1987). They are not sharply differentiated, and a whole range of intermediates occurs sporadically within the general range of *L.*

semenovii. The two varieties are separated as follows:

- 1a. Sterile branches 2 or 3, not more than twice as long as membranaceous scales; plants 10–15 cm high var. *chrysocephalum*
- 1b. Sterile branches often solitary, completely covered by white membranaceous scales; plants 2–6 cm high var. *sedoides*

Limonium semenovii (Herder) Kuntze var. ***chrysocephalum*** (Regel) Grubov, comb. nov. Basionym: *Statice chrysocephala* Regel, Trudy Imp. S. Peterburgsk. Bot. Sada 6: 383. 1880. TYPE: China. Xinjiang: Tian-Shan, Borborogussun, 3,000–4,000 ft., 28 Apr. 1879, A. Regel s.n. (holotype, LE).

Limonium semenovii (Herder) Kuntze var. ***sedoides*** (Regel) Grubov, comb. nov. Basionym: *Statice sedoides* Regel, Trudy Imp. S. Peterburgsk. Bot. Sada 6: 384. 1880. TYPE: China. Xinjiang: Sudabhang des dschungarischen Alatau, 6,000 ft., 7 Aug. 1878, A. Regel s.n. (holotype, LE).

Although the original publication of *Statice chrysocephala* and *S. sedoides* cited more than one collection for each, the author clearly selected the types above, as evidenced by his own handwriting on the sheets at LE.

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Literature Cited

Peng, T.-X. 1987. Plumbaginaceae. In: Lee, S.-K. (editor), Fl. Reipubl. Popularis Sinica 60(1): 1–47.